

Final – December 9, 2005

State Collaborative Meeting Summary
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Environmental officials from nine states met today and yesterday in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to collaborate on air pollution control issues for a region of the country stretching from the Mid-West to the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast. The meeting was sponsored by the states of Illinois, Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania, and these states along with Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Virginia and Wisconsin met to discuss federal air standards, how they might coordinate on environmental measures designed to help meet those standards, as well as to prepare for new more stringent standards likely on the way.

The environmental officials are also members of the Lake Michigan Air Directors Consortium (LADCO) and the Ozone Transport Commission (OTC), organizations which overall represent eighteen (18) states plus the District of Columbia on air pollution matters regarding ground level ozone, soot and smog.

The focus of the meeting is on attainment of the various health based pollution standards states must comply with within the next several years. Within the region, there are 263 counties or partial counties that do not meet the federal standards for ground level ozone, and 126 counties or partial counties that exceed the fine particulate matter standard. There are approximately 112 million citizens in these states, almost one-half of the US population. Nationwide, the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that there are tens of thousands of premature deaths each year due to these pollutants. Furthermore, based on numerous health studies and findings, the fine particulate standard is expected to be revised downward in the upcoming year as EPA reassesses the standard in accordance with requirements of the Clean Air Act.

Existing efforts at the local, state and federal levels have reduced these pollutants and their precursors (Sulfur Dioxide, Nitrogen oxides and Volatile Organic Compounds) over time, and are expected to continue to do so, but these efforts will be insufficient to gain the reductions needed to meet the standards in areas with the highest levels of pollution. In these areas federal programs designed to assist the states in meeting the standards will fall short. Under the federal air pollution structure this may result in the states being forced to implement costly local programs in an effort to achieve compliance. Participating states are interested in exploring ways to achieve compliance with standards in all areas while at the same time avoiding costly and ineffective controls.

The collaborating states began discussions on how to forge agreements among their members on various air pollution control initiatives that would help them meet these standards. They agreed to explore several measures immediately, including:

- working to establish one consistent environmentally-sensitive formulated gasoline for the super-region;

- developing consistent standards designed to reduce pollutants on a range of consumer products; and
- addressing emissions from large Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Boilers.

In addition, the states identified measures they will work on over the coming months, including:

- retrofitting diesel engines;
- accelerating the “chip reflash”; and
- reducing volatile emissions from architectural, industrial and maintenance coatings.

The states agreed to meet again toward the end of January to review progress on the initiatives identified above as well as to pursue agreement on energy related emission issues, including emerging technology initiatives and incentives and cost-effective reductions that may still be needed from the power generating sector, while keeping in mind the need to promote clean, affordable and secure energy investments.